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Patients' Rights, My Foot: 'ClintonCare' Rears Its Ugly Head **The 'Era of Big Government': *It's Ba-aack!***

In his 1996 State of the Union address, Bill Clinton declared the "era of big government" to be over. But Tuesday night, with characteristic shamelessness, he forgot his earlier pronouncement and outlined a host of new programs that will easily approach *half a trillion dollars* in new spending. With this renewed era of bigger government, Bill Clinton threatens to close his term as "the last headache of the 20th century," not as some nonexistent bridge to the 21st.

- ▶ In 1996, after the public rejected his proposal for a wholesale government takeover of the health care system, President Clinton admitted, "What I tried to do before won't work." He then vowed to keep pushing for government-run health care "a step at a time until eventually *we finish this*" (emphasis added).
- ▶ Tuesday night he made a push for his latest step, a Kennedy-style "Patients' Bill of Rights" that has nothing to do with patients' rights, but everything to do with expanding the federal government's control over Americans' health care. The only right "KennedyCare" guarantees is the right to lose your health insurance.

A Barents Group (a division of KPMG Peat Marwick) analysis reveals that "KennedyCare" would:

- ▶ Cause over *two million* Americans to lose their health coverage.
- ▶ Require \$10 billion or more in additional federal and state taxes over five years.
- ▶ Eliminate over 269,000 jobs within five years.
- ▶ Cost households over \$400 per year.
- ▶ Cost employers over \$260 per covered worker per year.

Unlike President Clinton, Republicans are committed to making health care more affordable, with expanded medical savings accounts (MSAs) and full health insurance deductibility for the self-employed. Clinton's overdue acceptance of a GOP tax credit for long-term care begs the question: why not make health care more affordable for *all* Americans?

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